

Holland

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"I strive, & keep my head above water!"

Holland is, in many ways, the most wonderful country under the sun.

are compelled to pass through canals, is very defective. Venturing, at ~~any~~ ^{the} expense of water, which can hardly stir, so flat is the land. ~~There is not~~ a stone or pebble to be found, & there are no hills save such as are raised by the wind. ~~is too soft, in fact, that~~ ^{in the land} ~~artificial~~ mountains of granite & slate have been brought at vast expense from Norway & Sweden, & sunk in the water to serve as barriers to the sea.

to serve as barometers to it.
Nature appears here as a hard-hearted
step-mother; man seems but little
benevolent to her; he has done everything
for himself; in return, he shows
but little respect to nature & her
ways. Trees, where they occur are
made a few in straight lines, as
if arranged by the plowman; their
branches are cut & clipped so as
to form green walls; most monstrous,
of all, their trunks are frequently
either polished or painted ~~over~~ with
~~bright colours~~ - this for the sake
of cleanliness!

Even that "chartered libertine" - the wind - is reduced to serve here. Surely so flat & unsheltered a land must be at the mercy of every wind that blows. Will no contrary, no & breath of

houses are "built upon the sand" & do
stand: not only houses, but cities:—
Amsterdam & Rotterdam have no
other foundation. Their sand is beam
& other ~~timber~~ ^{timber} logs, staked in
the marshes, with willow piles or driven
through many feet of soft earth, millions
of solid beams, which, hidden under
ground, support the crowded buildings
of the big cities.

We speak contemptuously of anything held together by straw, yet a long line of coast of several provinces is consolidated by no other means than a few reeds intermixed with strand wisps or woven into mats. ~~Without~~ ^{Without} this frail but essential support, the people dwelt on sand-hills, would be driven across into the interior, & would overwhelm whole districts of cultivated land. In Holland the laws of nature seem to be reversed; the ~~water~~ ^{the rivers are} sea is higher than the land; the ~~lowest~~ ^{lowest} ground in the country is ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ so far below high water mark. ~~as~~ ⁱⁿ no other country do the heels of the ships float above the chimneys of the houses, & no where else does the frog croaking among the bulrushes, look down upon the swallow on the house-tops.

These rivers take Reis' course, it is
not in beds of Reis' own choosing; they are

generation. These birds are not only never injured or disturbed, but a cart-wheel or some other contrivance is often placed on the houses, so that neither party that the bird may not build in in the chimney itself so as to stop it up. Their eggs nests are to be seen on the edge of a field or near a chimney on the roofs of farms, houses or even in the barn a food enough for the dwellers during when the stork builds on a roof, & to kill one of these birds would be enough little less than a crime. The storks usually migrate southwards in August & return in May - the old ones, to their former nests. During a great fire which raged, in 1536, in the town of Delft, the storks were seen bearing away their young ones from their nests through the midst of the flames & where they could not escape this, perishing with the ~~fire~~ ^{heat} they could not save. Every species of bird is religiously protected from injury & bird nesting is prohibited by law, for the birds eat the insects which would destroy the prairies which birds are seen deface.

Immense

Peter kept when he worked as a shipwright at Harolde on. The armour of Admiral Tromp with its bullet marks; the grey leather doublet, sprinkled with blood, which William Prince of Orange wore on the day when he was murdered at Delft. The picture gallery is the most interesting collection; it is confined almost entirely to the works of the Dutch masters, Paul Potter's Young Bull, which has been valued at £5,000, & Rembrandt's Cow Drinking, & Gerard Dou's Woman with her baby in a cradle, & many other famous pictures. Not the least curious thing about Holland is that a great school of painting should have been developed in a land which contains so little to please the imagination: but the Dutch pictures are hardly works of imagination; they are usually small pictures of quite homely subjects - a market-woman with a hare in her hand, a man blowing a trumpet, or a boy blowing bubbles, a view of the inside or outside of a church, an old woman peeling potatoes: These pictures are delightful, ~~only~~ because they are such true imitations of life as are to be found ~~wonderfully~~ ~~coloured~~, they please the eye though they are without the poetical ~~feeling~~ ~~which~~ should

John Van der Does, the Beaufortmaster-chief
magistrate - was Pieter Van der Werf; himself,
a patrician, both, worthy to rule this city of
brave men. When Van der Does was urged by
Faldy to surrender, he replied for himself
& his townsmen, "When provisions fail us
we will devours our left hands, & recover
our right to defend our liberty." For
nearly four months the inhabitants had
held out without murmurings, even
women & children taking a share
in the defence. For seven weeks bread
had not been seen within the walls; hens,
cats & dogs, rats & lizards were eagerly
devoured. Their friends outside inspiring
them to now in provisions a mere
despair, for steadily up the blockades
mantained. Pestilence came in
the train of famine, & carried off the
people so fast, that the starving bodies
who were spared were scarcely able to
bury their dead.

At length two carrier pigeons flew
into the town - gentle messengers bearing
good news. The Prince of Orange had
determined to cut the dykes of the
Maas & Ijssel to relieve the heroic town.
As this fearful alternative could not be
resorted to without inundating in tidal rivers,
the whole province of Holland, it is not
wonder it was only adopted after much hesitation
- as a last resource. The dykes, once cut
the country would be flooded, the Spanish
army.

Army submerged, & boats laden with provisions, would be able to reach the walls of the forsaken city. The dykes were cut, the country between Gouda, Gorl, Rotterdam & Leyden was submerged, but, alas, only to the depth of a few feet; the 200 boats sent by the Prince of Orange for their relief were in sight of the inhabitants, but could get no nearer, the water was not deep enough. The wind was unfavourable; so long as the easterly breeze prevailed, they ~~saw~~^{left} from ^{8ard from} towers & houses tops that they ~~must~~^{could} not look in vain for the ' welcome ocean.'

~~But~~ While men patiently waited, they were literally starving; for even the famine endured at Haarlem had not exceeded that depth & intensity of gloom to which Leyden was now reduced. Women & children, all day long, were seen searching fathoms & along hills, for morsels of food which they devoured greedily with the infants starved to death on their mothers' breasts; mothers dropped dead in the streets with their dead children in their arms.

In many a house the watchmen, in their rounds, found a whole family of corpses - father, mother, children - side by side. Pestilence stalked all noon-day through the city, as the deadmost inhabitant well like fresh before his death. From six thousand to eight thousand human beings fell ~~sick~~^{sank} before this scourge alone; yet the

the people resolutely held out; women, & men, mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foe - an evil more horrible than pest or famine.

Leyden was sublimine in its despair. A few mutinies were, however, occasionally heard at the steadfastness of the magistrates; & a Head of body was placed at the door of the Burghmaster as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more spirit-hearted citizens assailed the heroic Pieter Van der Werf with threats & reproaches to be passed along the streets. A crowd had gathered around him by the church of St. Pancras: Here stood the Burghmaster, a tall, haggard, impious figure, with dark visage & a tranquil but commanding eye. He waved his broad-brimmed felt hat for silence, & then exclaimed, "What would ye my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our oaths & surrender the city to the Spaniards? - a fate more horrible than the yoke which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city; & may God give me strength to keep my oath. Your unances move me not. My life is at your disposal. Here is my sword; plunge it into my breast, & divide my flesh, among you. Take my body to appease your hunger but expect no surrender so long as

I remain alive."

The crowd fell back in silence; but happily their misery was now nearly at an end. The wind changed to the north-west driving the tide up the river - a violent equinoctial gale, which presently shotted & blew with still more violence from the South-west. The waters of the North Sea were piled in vast masses upon the southern coast of Holland, & then dashed furiously landward, the ocean rising over the earth & sweeping with unrestrained power across the ruined dykes. The inundation spread to the walls of Leyden with such suddenness that the Spanish rampart, were surrounded, & more than ~~to the~~ a thousand of their soldiers were overwhelmed in the flood. The same tide which swept them away, carried the flotilla of boats, laden with provisions to the gate of Leyden. Before the inhabitants were relieved, on more anxious night, a pale dark night followed; then were morning lights, & strange sounds, & a terrible crash as of falling walls. The horror struck citizens, thought the Spaniards were upon them at last. Day dawned at length. Within the fortresses reigned a death-like silence, which inspired a sickening suspicion. Had the city indeed been carried in